

**Acidification:** To make a substance more acidic. Acidification also means that a substance loses its acid neutralizing capacity (ANC). ANC is a measure of the ability for water or soil to neutralize added acids.

**Brackish:** A mixture of salt water and fresh water.

**Bulkhead:** (1) A man-made structure separating land and water areas. (2) A structure or partition to retain or prevent sliding of the land. A secondary purpose is to protect the upland against damage from ocean waves.

**Carbonic acid:** The acid ( $\text{H}_2\text{CO}_3$ ) that is formed when carbon dioxide dissolves in water.

**Carrion:** The dead and rotting body of an animal; carrion is food for scavenging animals.

**Coniferous:** Cone-bearing trees, mostly evergreens that have needle-shaped or scale-like leaves. They produce wood known commercially as softwood.

**Coastal Shelves:** Also known as coastal plains, coastal shelves are composed of a horizontal or gently sloping layer of gravel bordering the coast. The shelves are often formed by aggradation, the geologic process by which various parts of the surface of the earth are raised in elevation or built up by material transported by water or wind.

**Deciduous:** Tree species that shed foliage in response to seasonal change. They produce wood known commercially as hardwood.

**Embayments:** An indentation in a coastline forming an open bay.

**Fauna:** Refers to all of the animals of a particular geographic region or time period, as a whole. It is used to distinguish animal species from plant species.

**Flora:** Refers to all of the plants of a particular geographic region or time period. It is used to distinguish plant species from animal species.

**Impervious:** Any surface that cannot effectively absorb or allow water to pass through it; for example, sidewalks, rooftops, roads, parking lots, sea walls.

**Permafrost:** Soil that is always frozen. Typically found in the polar regions of the Earth.

**Polyp:** Most coral is made up of hundreds of thousands of individual polyps. Polyps are delicate, limestone-secreting animals that range in size from one to three millimeters in diameter.

**Predation:** A relationship between animals in which one organism captures and feeds on others.

**Submergent/depositional coast:** A coast in which formerly dry land has been recently covered by water, either by land subsidence or a rise in sea level.

**Subsidence:** The sinking of a part of the earth's surface.

**Terrestrial:** Of or referring to land, as opposed to water. Forests, deserts, prairies, mountain ranges and wetlands are all examples of terrestrial ecosystems.

**Turbidity:** Turbidity is the amount of particulate matter that is suspended in water.

**Zooxanthellae:** A plant-like algae that has a symbiotic (mutually beneficial relationship) with virtually all reef-dwelling corals. The algae live inside the coral polyps and performs photosynthesis, producing food which is shared with the coral. In exchange for the food, the coral provides the zooxanthellae with protection and access to light, which is necessary for photosynthesis.